



BUSINESS PLAN 2025/26

ROYAL ACADEMY
OF DANCE

Introduction

Our vision sets out where we want to be by 2030, with our strategy explaining what we will do over the next five years to get there. Here, our business plan, sets out the elements of our strategy we will focus on in the coming year.

In the **immediate future** we need to focus on those elements of our vision and strategy that will contribute most effectively to strengthening our financial resilience: launching and embedding creative ballet and musical theatre, evolving our teacher education, well-targeted international growth, maximising use of London headquarters and developing new areas of fundraising. The coming

year will also see developments in some of the critical enabling areas, including our people processes, technology, and financial management.

Alongside these, to **secure our longer-term future**, we need to develop a strategy for our international development more broadly. To inform this we will undertake research with our national directors, so that in future we can align our offer more closely to local preferences as well as entering new markets and exploring different business models. We also need to define and develop our value proposition to our members, so that they continue to feel valued and supported throughout their careers.

Our development priorities

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Improve our impact in dance and in society	Excellence: Define what we mean by excellence in our across the different areas of our work, with clear criteria and principles, to clarify what we should aim for in all that we do.	To fulfil our mission, with excellence as our guiding principle, we need to define what this means and looks like in each of our areas of activity and use these to guide our development.
	International opportunities for growth: - Research national trends, cultural preferences, and our competitors, in existing and new territories, as a basis for our international strategy. - In parallel, explore India and the Middle East as potential markets for ballet as areas known to be interested.	Understanding international research is a pre-requisite for a well-targeted international strategy, to help us prioritise where to focus our attention, both in existing countries and countries new to us. This will need investment, as well as the involvement of our national directors.
	Marketing: Develop marketing assets – templates and tools – for our national directors and teachers.	Marketing materials/assets have been requested, both by national offices and teachers. This will help extend our reach.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Elevate our teacher education	Initial teacher education: Review and refresh the Certificate in Dance Teaching, to meet student and employers' needs globally, to equip teachers to teach RAD syllabi and to increase the numbers of new teachers.	Feedback is consistent on needing a better pipeline of new dance teachers coming through equipped to teach RAD syllabi. We need to adapt to continue to be regarded as the best in the world for teacher training.
	Degree programmes: Review and develop our degree programmes, as agreed by the board.	This is necessary to retain our future position as a leading arts academy, as well as to improve numbers and financial resilience in this area.
	Life-long learning – continuing excellence: - Review our approach to Continuing Professional Development (CPD), to clarify learning pathways and improve the range of what we offer, de-duplicating this around the world to improve efficiency. - Explore the technology required to provide on-demand material, including that currently used in our teacher education. - Identify incentives for improving CPD compliance.	Needs a more detailed plan to confirm how much needs to be done in 2025/26 and what might wait until 2026/27.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Expand take-up of ballet and go beyond	New syllabi: Launch creative ballet and musical theatre, including teacher training.	These have been agreed as the current artistic priorities.
	Existing syllabus – reinforce our current syllabus offer: - Refilm grades 6-8 for our current ballet syllabus. - Ensure exam specifications are translated as needed.	Refilming – agreed as a priority through the Artistic subcommittee. Translations requested via hub meetings (e.g. Brazil).
	Exam operations – improve urgent examination processes: - Improve the speed of issuing marks and certificates. - Review exam moderation procedures and implement changes as necessary.	The speed of issuing certificates, although improving, needs addressing further. Exam moderation has been raised as having real consequences in some places.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Enhance value to members	Value proposition: Define the value proposition for members, for different interest groups and categories.	We will specify what members get for their money and show how much we value them as part of the RAD global community.
	Membership IT: Continue to improve our membership IT systems to improve customer experience and efficiency.	Details are to be confirmed, and subject to budget. We may have to continue with basic operations this year, moving to enhanced technology in subsequent years.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Build strong global foundations	International operations: - Clarify the basis on which national offices have been established and understand the implications at local and group level. - Scope, plan and begin to implement a finance transformation programme globally (processes, systems and capability) to improve financial management and visibility of our financial position. - Collect data on those employed in national offices as the starting point for extending our people management and HR processes globally. - Develop the hub structure to improve support to, and communications between, national offices, and define the role of hub leads.	Our national offices have grown organically over time, with largely manual financial processes and a range of governance arrangements. To ensure we can fulfil our duties at group level, we need to review and improve the resilience of our international operations.
	People: - Develop and implement improvements to our people policies and processes, with an initial focus on the basics (statutory changes, contracts, pay and grading). - Carry out a people survey and start to act on results (Spring 2026). - Subject to funding, start to develop an intranet system.	The Governance and People subcommittees recommended these areas as the initial focus.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Build strong global foundations	Finance: - Undertake activity analysis to identify opportunities for streamlining - Build a five-year financial plan, testing assumptions through subcommittees. - Start to develop our commercial strategy. - Renegotiate our bank loan.	International finance – links with the objective around international governance. Bank loan needs to be agreed by July 2026, for the new loan to start July 2027.
	London HQ: Find partner/s to share our headquarters building from 2026/7 and make the necessary physical adjustments, considering any lease restrictions.	Physical changes to the building may need capital investment.
	Data and technology: - Rationalise, streamline and improve our automated payments system. - Support improvements to our membership system. - Develop a technology and data strategy to enable us to prioritise future investment to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our services.	Data and technology improvements are critical to our future efficiency and effectiveness, and to improve user experience.

Strategic theme	Our priorities for 2025/26	Comments
Build strong global foundations	Fundraising: • Design and launch new supporter/friend scheme (working with membership). • Design and launch a legacy scheme. • Continue to grow revenue fundraising, with a new international focus. • Assess historic restricted funds and whether any can be unrestricted.	These are the areas for focus agreed by Fundraising and Development subcommittee.
	Governance: • Improve governance, with an initial focus on framework of delegation, trustee and co-optee induction, aligning board and subcommittees with strategy.	Specific priorities and sequencing to be agreed by the Governance and People subcommittees.

Managing our performance

We will monitor progress in delivering our business plan priorities through our executive board, with regular reports to the board of trustees and relevant subcommittees. The aim is to improve our overall performance as an organisation, for the benefit of our students, members and participants, and for wider society.

We will assess the impact of these developments on our performance as an organisation, through a series of performance measures. There is, of course, a time-lag between implementing our strategy and our performance improving. We are evolving our approach to performance measurement, relating to the following areas. For each of these we wish to understand trends over time as well as performance against targets or levels of ambition.

Principal activities:	Enabling activities:	Financial performance:
Teacher education	People	UK
Continuing professional development	Fundraising	National offices
Exams	Trading	Group
Membership	Marketing	RAD Enterprises